

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
SS-15 ICA-11 AID-05 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03 TRSE-00
XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 /114 W
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R 151137Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7600
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PDEV, PINT, ECON, SU
SUBJECT: NIMEIRI RESUMES MONTHLY TELEVISION ADDRESS TO NATION

1. NIMEIRI RESUMED MONTHLY "FACE UP THE NATION" TELEVISION TALKS ON MONDAY, JUNE 12 AFTER SKIPPING MARCH, APRIL AND MAY APPEARANCES. HE CLAIMED HE HAD READ ALL LETTERS RECEIVED ON PUBLIC AFFAIRS SINCE HIS FEBRUARY SPEECH AND HAD TAKEN APPROPRIATE ACTION DESPITE BEING TOO BUSY TO MAKE TELEVISION REPORTS. BULK OF THIS SPEECH CONCERNED NEW JOB EVALUATION AND CLASSIFICATION SCHEME RECENTLY DEVELOPED IN RESPONSE TO LABOR UNREST WHICH HAD PEAKED IN MARCH AND APRIL. NIMEIRI SAID FIRST STAGE OF NEW WAGE SCHEME WOULD BEGIN JULY 1978 WITH HALF OF PROPOSED WAGE INCREASES, COSTING SUDANGOV 37 MILLION POUNDS. SECOND STATE BEGINNING JULY 1979 WOULD BRING FULL INCREASES AS ESTABLISHED BY SPECIAL COMMITTEE. NIMEIRI ANSWERED SERIES OF SET-UP QUESTIONS, SUCH AS WHAT ARE

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ADVANTAGES OF NEW WAGE SCHEME FOR WORKERS, WHAT ARE BENEFITS OF NEW CLASSIFICATIONS, BY LISTING AT GREAT LENGTH ALL PRESUMED ADVANTAGES. MOST STATEMENTS WERE RATHER VAGUE BUT NATURALLY QUITE FAVORABLE.

2. NIMEIRI OPENED HIS SPEECH WITH REFERENCE TO HIS EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF ARAB UNITY AS CHAIRMAN OF ARAB LEAGUE'S

SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE. HE RETURNED TO THIS TOPIC NEAR CONCLUSION OF TALK. ACKNOWLEDGING MANY INQUIRIES ABOUT HIS PROGRESS TOWARDS UNITY, HE CLAIMED HE PREFERRED "NOT TO DISCLOSE MUCH" AND "WOULD KEEP IT A SECRET" ALTHOUGH SUCCESS OF SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE IS ASSURED BY "INEVITABILITY" OF ARAB UNITY.

3. ON PETROLEUM IN SUDAN, NIMEIRI GAVE GOOD BRIEFING ON STATUS OF EXPLORATION ATTEMPTS, REFUTING WILD CLAIMS OF GREAT OIL WEALTH BUT GOING BEYOND MAY 25 SPEECH BY CLAIMING THAT OIL PROSPECTING "IS MORE THAN PROMISING." HE ADVISED CITIZENS TO COMBAT INFLATIONARY PRICES BY BUYING LESS AND SPENDING MONEY ONLY "TOWARDS THE WELFARE OF THE FAMILY AND... NOT IN ANY WAY THAT MAY DISPLEASE GOD." HE RECOMMENDED BARGAINING BY CONSUMERS IN MARKETPLACES. HE PRAISED THOSE WHO REPORTED ILLEGAL PRICES AND CORRUPTION TO PROPER AUTHORITIES, URGED PRODUCERS TO PROVIDE MORE FOOD FOR MARKET, AND CALLED ON SUDAN SOCIALIST UNION TO HELP CONTROL PRICES. INTER ALIA, NIMEIRI TOLD LADY CORRESPONDENT WHO SEEKS TAXI DRIVER'S LICENSE THAT HE BELIEVES WOMEN'S ROLE IS AT HOME WITH FAMILY.

4. COMMENT: SPEECH IS REMARKABLE FOR ITS NEAR TOTAL CONCENTRATION ON DOMESTIC ECONOMIC PROBLEMS ESPECIALLY INFLATION, HIGH PRICES AND LOW WAGES. NIMEIRI OBVIOUSLY IS WILLING TO TRY JAWBONING ON THESE INELUCTABLE DIFFICULTIES.

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CULTIES, THUS BETRAYING HIS LACK OF EFFECTIVE OPTIONS AT THIS TIME. ON OTHER HAND, BUSINESS COMMUNITY WHICH WAS BURNT BY SUDDEN DEVALUATION LAST WEEK IS FULL OF RUMORS OF IMPENDING PROBLEMS SUCH AS FURTHER DEVALUATION, SCARCITIES, LACK OF CREDIT AND FAILURE OF SERVICES. TO BUSINESSMEN AND UNDERPAID WORKERS, SPEECH MAY HAVE BEEN REASSURING IN SOME MEASURE, AS INTENDED. NIMEIRI OMITTED MENTION OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMPLETELY, EXCEPT FOR REMARKS ABOUT ARAB LEAGUE SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE, AND THUS ALSO FAILED TO MAKE HIS CUSTOMARY ANTI-SOVIET WARNINGS.

BERGUS

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